



# DISASTER APPALLING

## Impossible to Estimate Number of Lives Missing Accurately--Conservative Estimate 500, May Reach Thousands.

## SAN FRANCISCO IS HELL OF FIRE

### Attempts to Fix Damage are Futile--Two Hundred Million Believed to Be Least Possible Amount--Every Hour Increases Awful Loss Caused By the Great Fire Fiend.

SAN FRANCISCO, April 18.—An earthquake and fire today has put nearly half of San Francisco in ruins and at least 200 people have been killed, and a thousand others injured. The property loss will exceed one hundred million dollars. Thousands are homeless and destitute and all day long streams of people have been fleeing from the stricken district to places of safety. It was 5:15 o'clock this morning when a terrific earthquake shook the city. One shock apparently lasted two minutes, followed by the almost immediate collapse of the flimsy structures all over the city. The water supply was cut off and when fires broke out in various sections, there was nothing to do but to let the buildings burn.

#### All Communication Is Shut Off

Telegraph and telephone communication is shut off. The Western Union is completely out of business. The Postal is the only one that managed to get a wire out of the city. About 10 o'clock, even the Postal was forced to suspend in San Francisco. Electric power is stopped, and cars do not run. The railroads and ferryboats have ceased. Department powerless to do anything except dynamite the threatened buildings. All day explosions have shaken the city and added to the terror of the inhabitants. Following the first shock another came within five minutes, but not nearly so severe. Three hours later there was another slight quake.

#### Damage Is Widespread

Reports from districts outside of San Francisco indicate widespread damage. San Jose, fifty miles south, lost many buildings and fifteen to twenty people were killed. The annex to the Vendome Hotel collapsed, fires broke out. Stanford University and Palo Alto suffered. At Stanford many handsome buildings were demolished, and two people killed. Junius Robert Halls of Bradford, Penn., and Otto Gurtis, a fireman, are their names.

Six other students are lying at the Palo Alto hospital bruised, cut, and with internal injuries, as follows: Ross Howard of San Francisco; Henry L. Dearing of Santa Ana; Froli, and Halbert R. Thomas of Los Angeles; Robert W. Westwick of Santa Barbara and W. W. Masters of Portland, Oregon.

The court house at Redwood City and other buildings have collapsed. Menlo Park, Burlingame, and other places, are destroyed.

#### Cliff House Swept Into Sea

SAN FRANCISCO, April 18.—From the Cliff House comes word that the great pleasure resort, which stood upon a foundation of solid rock, has been swept into the sea. Not a thing stands to tell where this monster building once stood. It has been leveled to the foundation, only the rock lining the sea coast remains intact.

The City Hall, costing \$7,000,000 was wrecked. About 6 o'clock tonight the world-famous Palace Hotel fell a prey to the conflagration and the Crocker building across the street, began emitting smoke. One of the big losses of the day was the destruction of the St. Ignatius church and college, the greatest Jesuit institution in the West, which cost a couple of millions.

In Union Square Park, where a number of homeless are now being

given temporary shelter, the mighty Dewey monument has been shifted from its base. It now stands leaning at an angle of ten degrees and there is danger of the immense stone structure falling.

This afternoon ferry boats resumed running from Oakland, tonight and thousands of homeless and panic-stricken people are leaving the city and seeking shelter in the suburbs. The suffering and hardship beggars description. Countless numbers of the residents in the poorer section of the city, including the Chinese, Japanese and Italians, are rendered homeless, and unless supplies reach the city within twenty-four hours starvation will add to the awful calamity.

#### Skyscrapers Are Destroyed

SAN FRANCISCO, April 18 (11 p. m.)—The Merchants' Exchange building, one of the handiest and most substantial buildings in the city, is in flames, as is also the Crocker-Woolworth Bank building. The former building is fourteen stories, having been completed last October. The Crocker-Woolworth building of twelve stories, of terra cotta and granite, stood opposite the Palace. The immense Mills building is surrounded by fire and will probably succumb. The Lick House, Occident Hotel and Russ House, are in immediate danger.

#### No Papers Are Issued

SAN FRANCISCO, April 18.—No afternoon papers were issued and it is doubtful if the morning papers will appear. Freaks of the earthquake were many. Wide fissures were made in the streets, the street railways twisted out of line, the sewers and water pipes burst, and it is feared that there will be an epidemic. Provisions are being sold at fancy prices, and even water is being vended by the glass.

It is impossible to give a list of the dead and wounded, or even a list of the principal buildings destroyed.

#### All Theatres in Ruins

SAN FRANCISCO, April 19.—All San Francisco's best play houses, including the Majestic, Columbia, Orpheum and Grand Opera House are masses of ruins. The earthquake has demolished them for all practical purposes, and the fire completed the work of destruction.

The handsome Rialto and Casserly buildings are burned to the ground as was everything in that district. The scene at the Mechanics' Pavilion during the early hours of the morning up to noon, when all the injured and dead were removed because of the threatened destruction of the building by fire, was one of indescribable sadness.

#### Search for the Missing

Sisters, brothers, wives and sweethearts searched eagerly for some missing dear one. Thousands hurriedly went through the building inspecting the cots on which the sufferers lay, in hope to find a loved one. The dead were placed in one portion of the building and the remainder was devoted to hospital purposes. After the fire forced the nurses and physicians to desert the building, eager crowds followed them to the Presidio and the children's hospital, where they renewed their search for missing relatives.

Up to a late hour this morning more than 275 persons seriously

#### Damage Cannot be Estimated

SAN FRANCISCO, April 18.—An estimate of the loss of life and the number injured in the earthquake today is an absolute impossibility. Conservative opinion however places the dead at from 250 to 500 with the possibility that the list will reach one thousand, and perhaps more. Equally futile is an attempt to fix the damage. \$200,000,000 is believed to be the least possible amount which will cover the damage already done, and every hour increases it. The injured will number over 1000.

injured had been treated at the various hospitals throughout the city. The front of the Bailey and Lacist building on Clay street near Montgomery fell in, killing three men. Captain Gleason, of the police department, was seriously injured at noon by the falling of a tile.

The occupants of the Call building as soon as they felt the earthquake shock rushed from the building and found a coffee house in the same street demolished. They at once set to work with axes and anything in the way of an implement with which they could provide themselves to rescue those inside.

#### San Mateo Is Flooded

As a result of the breaking of the mains of the Spring Valley Water Company, San Mateo is flooded. It was owing to broken mains that the fire gained such headway in San Francisco. San Rafael, despite its own troubles, has dispatched its apparatus to San Francisco.

The fire swept down the streets so rapidly that it was practically impossible to save anything in the way. It reached the Grand Opera House, on Mission street, in a moment and burned through the roof. The Metropolitan Opera Company of New York has just opened the season and all the expensive scenery and costumes are reduced to ashes.

#### Call Building Devoured

From the Opera House the fire leaped from building to building, quickly leveling them. The Call's editorial and mechanical department was destroyed in a few minutes, and the flames leaped across Stevenson street towards the fine fifteen-story stone and iron Claus Spreckles building which, with its lofty dome, is the most notable edifice in San Francisco. Two small wooden buildings furnished fuel to ignite the splendid pile. Thousands of people watched the hungry tongues of flames licking the stone walls. At first no impression was made, suddenly by the cracking of the glass, an entrance was effected. The interior furnishings on the fourth floor were the first to go. Then, as though by magic, smoke issued from the top of the dome. This was followed by a most spectacular illumination. The round windows of the dome showed like full moons and bursting gave vent to long waving streams of flame. The great structure which had withstood the forces of the earth, appeared to fall a doom to the prey of fire. After a while, however, the light grew less intense, and the flames finding nothing more to consume, gradually went out, leaving the building standing, but completely gutted.

#### Roar of Flames Heard Miles

Banks and commercial houses supposed to be fire-proof, burned quickly, the roar of the flames was heard even to the hills out of the danger zone. Here thousands of people witnessed the awful scene. Great masses of flame rose high into the heavens or rushed down the narrow street, joining midway between the sidewalks and making a horizontal chimney of the former passageways.

Dense smoke arose above the entire business district and spread out like an immense funnel which could be seen miles at sea. Occasionally some drug store place stored with chemicals was reached and most fantastic effects produced by the colored flames, and smoke, which rolled out against a darker background.

#### List of Buildings Destroyed

SAN FRANCISCO, April 18.—The following is an incomplete list of the principal buildings destroyed or damaged:

Call Building, entirely destroyed; Claus Spreckles building gutted; Hearst building collapsed; New Chronicle building, hardly damaged; White House, walls badly cracked; Winchester Hotel, totally destroyed; Grand Opera House, entirely destroyed; Claus Spreckles' house and stables on Van Ness avenue, badly damaged; St. Luke's Episcopal church will be pulled down; Mechanics' Library building, the cornices fell; Crocker Building, slightly damaged; Lick House, walls caved in; Upham Building, on Pine and Battery, totally destroyed, the loss is \$550,000; the fire house on Bush street, where Chief Sullivan and his wife were sleeping in the engine house, was severely injured, bricks crashing through the roof from the California Hotel; California Hotel, on Bush street, upper walls collapsed and upper floors wrecked; St. Francis Hotel, exterior slightly cracked and seamed, though not seriously damaged; Pacific Union Club, on Post and Stockton streets in front is damaged, and there are fissures in the rear wall. St. Dominics' church on Pierce street is a total loss; the loss to the parish is about \$300,000; the Concordia Club building, on Van Ness avenue, has several fissures in the side, and rebuilding will be necessary. The hotel Granda is badly damaged.